United Nations A/53/321

General Assembly

Distr.: General
3 September 1998

Original: English

Fifty-third session
Item 96 (g) of the provisional agenda*
Sustainable development and international economic cooperation: cultural development

Cultural development

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the General Assembly the report of the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on cultural development, which was prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution 52/197 of 18 December 1997.

* A/53/150.

98-25902 (E) 280998

Annex

Report of the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on cultural development

Introduction

1. General Assembly resolution 52/197 was based on an awareness of the crucial relationship between culture and development. In the resolution, the Assembly encouraged the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to accord priority to this theme in its work. It also requested the Secretary-General to include the outcome of the Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies for Development, to be held in Stockholm, in the report on the implementation of the resolution. As the efforts undertaken by UNESCO in the area of culture and development after the autumn of 1997 were concentrated on preparations for the Conference, whose ultimate purpose was to pursue the same objectives as those set out in the resolution, the present report is devoted entirely to the Conference itself.

2. The Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies for Development was held in Stockholm from 30 March to 2 April 1998. It brought together some 2,400 participants representing 149 Governments, 22 international intergovernmental organizations, over 100 non-governmental organizations, foundations, voluntary associations and other civil society entities, as well as many individual artists, scholars and experts. The Conference was convened by the Director-General of UNESCO in accordance with a decision adopted by the Executive Board of UNESCO at its 151st session (May–June 1997), which envisaged the event as a conference at the ministerial level, in category II of the UNESCO system of classification of types of meetings (intergovernmental meetings other than intergovernmental conferences of States).

3. The point of departure for the Conference was the new light on the interactions between culture and development shed by the World Commission on Culture and Development in the report, entitled *Our Creative Diversity*,[1] which it submitted to the General Conference of UNESCO in November 1995 and to the General Assembly in November 1996. The Commission underlined that when culture is understood as the basis of development the very notion of cultural policy has to be considerably broadened. Any policy for development must be profoundly sensitive to and inspired by culture itself. In order to bring such thinking into the policy- and decision-making mainstream, the World Commission had recommended several actions, including the organization of a ministerial level meeting on cultural policies in 1998. This idea was taken up by the Government of Sweden, which considered that such an international gathering would be an indispensable step towards giving practical follow-up to the work of the Commission and at the same time strengthening UNESCO efforts with regard to international cooperation in the cultural policy field. In 1996, therefore, the Swedish authorities invited the Director-General to organize such a conference and declared their readiness to host the gathering. This invitation was considered by the Executive Board of UNESCO, which decided in June 1997 that an Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies for Development should be held in Stockholm from 30 March to 2 April 1998 and set out its terms of reference.

[1] Paris, UNESCO, 1996

Preparation of the Conference

4. In accordance with the terms of reference for the Conference and in consultation with the Ministries of Education and Culture of Sweden, the Director-General formally convened the Conference in July 1997, drawing up for this purpose a preliminary agenda based on major problem areas in which it appeared necessary to explore and define practical measures at the national, regional and international levels. The document identified the strengthening of UNESCO contributions to cultural policy formulation as a second core purpose of the Conference. With these goals in mind, the Director-General also proposed to ensure the full participation of representatives of civil society and the private sector alongside those of Governments and to design the Conference with a view to ensuring a maximum of free interaction between and among them. The Director-General's proposals having been endorsed by member States, the secretariat prepared a background document which reviewed the main challenges and key issues regarding cultural policies and development. So as to enable the Conference not only to explore new ideas, but also to take them to the plane of strategies and action, the document explored actual policy challenges rather than theoretical issues or basic concepts. In the same spirit, the Director-General also submitted a draft action plan on cultural policies for development in which he proposed that the Conference adopt a number of key policy commitments.

Structure of the Conference

5. The Conference was organized in three types of sessions: plenary, forum and agora. For the plenary sessions, Ministers and senior officials were asked to focus their remarks on the proposals contained in the draft action plan, the final version of which was intended to be the principal outcome of the Conference. The Director-General also decided to invite a number of eminent individuals as guest speakers with a view to enriching the plenary debate. The forum sessions, each organized and chaired by a different member State, were designed as structured discussions on the 10 conference themes, with a view to exploring major current issues and challenges at the national and international levels. For this purpose, individual specialists were invited to open each session with a panel discussion. The agora sessions were conceived as a rich and varied menu of independent workshops and seminars organized by intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and associations, foundations and the like with a view to highlighting ideas and new initiatives across a broad spectrum of cultural policy-related areas. Several other events were also envisaged. The organization of the Business Forum was entrusted to the Progressio Foundation, based in the Netherlands, while the UNESCO secretariat organized the Youth Forum. The International Federation of Actors took the initiative of organizing a conference entitled "Performance Priorities for Cultural Policy Making" and the Swedish Joint Committee for Literary and Artistic Professionals held a conference entitled "Towards a Cultural Agenda 21". This conference structure was innovative not only in the breadth of its subject matter and the diversity of participation but also because it made possible real interaction between governmental and non-governmental concerns. The representatives of non-governmental organizations thus participated fully in the Conference rather than simply holding their own discussions parallel to it.

6. Ms. Marita Ulvskog, Minister of Culture of Sweden, was elected President of the Conference by acclamation. The Conference elected the following Vice-Presidents: Mr. Pantcho Tzankov, Deputy Minister of Culture of Bulgaria; Dr. Ramiro Osorio Fonseca, Minister of Culture of Colombia; Dr. Ataollah Mohajerani, Minister of Culture and Islamic

Guidance of the Islamic Republic of Iran; Mr. Jacques Adiahenot, Minister of Communication and Culture of Gabon; and Mr. Abdelbaki Hermassi, Minister of Culture of Tunisia.

7. Representatives of the following member States were elected members of the Drafting Group, which was entrusted with the task of preparing a revised draft of the action plan on cultural policies for development: China, Cuba, Egypt, France, India, Lithuania, Mozambique, Mexico, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Senegal and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Mr. Noureini Tidjani-Serpos, a scholar and diplomat currently serving as the Permanent Delegate of Benin to UNESCO and who was the Chairman of the Executive Board of the Organization in 1996/97, was elected Rapporteur-General by acclamation and in that capacity served as Chairman of the Drafting Group.

8. The Conference held seven plenary meetings between 30 March and 2 April 1998. Ministers or senior officials representing 83 Governments took part in the debate, together with the representatives of five intergovernmental organizations and one non-governmental organization. The President of the Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Mr. Miguel Angel Martínez; the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth, Chief Emeka Anyaoku; the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe, Mr. Daniel Tarschys; and the Director-General of the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Dr. Abdulaziz Altwajiri, made statements to the plenary. A special statement on behalf of the World Bank was also made by Mr. Ismail Serageldin, Vice-President for Special Programs. In addition, reports were presented to the plenary by the organizers of the 10 forum sessions and the coordinators of the 36 agora sessions, as well as by representatives of the Youth Forum and the Conference of the International Federation of Actors. A keynote address was delivered by Jan Pronk, Minister of Development Cooperation of the Netherlands, and the following guest speakers also addressed the plenary: Vigdis Finnbogadottir (Iceland), Bahia Hariri (Lebanon); Eusebio Leal (Cuba); Lisbeth Palme (Sweden); David Puttnam (United Kingdom); Rita Süssmuth (Germany). The Drafting Group took into consideration the bulk of the ideas presented and incorporated them into a revised version of the draft action plan on cultural policies for development, which was discussed and adopted at the seventh and final plenary meeting of the Conference on 2 April 1998.

Action Plan on Cultural Policies for Development

9. The Action Plan on Cultural Policies for Development, which was the principal outcome of the Conference, is reproduced in the appendix to the present document.

Appendix

Action Plan on Cultural Policies for Development*

Adopted by the Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies for Development in Stockholm on 2 April 1998

* The final version of the Action Plan is based on the definitive French text, which incorporates amendments introduced by Member States at the time of adoption and approved by the Rapporteur-General on 7 April 1998.

PREAMBLE

The Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies for Development, held at Stockholm (30 March-2 April 1998),

1. *Reaffirming the fundamental principles of the Final Declaration adopted by the World Conference on Cultural Policies in Mexico on 6 August 1982, entitled the Mexico City Declaration on Cultural Policies, which stresses "that in its widest sense, culture may now be said to be the whole complex of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterize a society or social group. It includes not only the arts and letters, but also modes of life, the fundamental rights of the human being, value systems, traditions and beliefs";*

2. *Recalling that the World Decade for Cultural Development stressed the importance of acknowledging the cultural dimension of development; asserting and enhancing cultural identities; broadening participation in cultural life; and promoting international cultural co-operation;*

3. *Conscious of the efforts needed to face the challenges of cultural development and preservation of the diversity of cultures, as expressed in "Our Creative Diversity", the Report of the World Commission on Culture and Development;*

4. *Emphasizing the need to take account of universal values while recognizing cultural diversity, the importance of national measures to harmonize national cultural policies and the need to preserve the pluralism of grassroots cultural initiatives in order to promote mutual understanding as well as respect and consideration between individuals and nations in view of the risk of disagreements and conflicts;*

5. *Recognizing that in a democratic framework civil society will become increasingly important in the field of culture;*

6. *Considering that one of the functions of cultural policies is to ensure sufficient scope for the flourishing of creative capacities;*

7. *Having regard to the ever more rapid processes of socio-economic, technological and cultural change, and the growing disparities at the national and international level, as well as the importance of respecting copyright and intellectual property in view of the risks and challenges arising from the promotion of cultural industries and trade in cultural products;*

8. *Considering that the activities of UNESCO, as well as the development policies of Member States, should take into account the role of cultural factors;*

9. *Taking note of the Declaration of the Conference of Ministers of Culture of the Non-Aligned Movement held at Medellin, Colombia, from 3 to 5 September 1997 and the Conclusions of the Panafrican Consultation on Cultural Policies for Development held at Lomé, Togo, from 10 to 13 February 1998, the meeting of ALECSO in Tunis in February 1998, the report entitled "In from the Margins" prepared under the auspices of the Council of Europe, and the "Pro Cultura" Charter adopted at Thessaloniki (June 1997);*

Recognizes the following principles:

1. Sustainable development and the flourishing of culture are interdependent.

2. One of the chief aims of human development is the social and cultural fulfilment of the individual.

3. Access to and participation in cultural life being a fundamental right of individuals in all communities, governments have a duty to create conditions for the full exercise of this right in accordance with Article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

4. The essential aims of cultural policy are to establish objectives, create structures and secure adequate resources in order to create an environment conducive to human fulfilment.

5. The dialogue between cultures appears to be one of the fundamental cultural and political challenges for the world today; it is an essential condition of peaceful coexistence.

6. Cultural creativity is the source of human progress; and cultural diversity, being a treasure of humankind, is an essential factor of development.

7. New trends, particularly globalization, link cultures ever more closely and enrich the interaction between them, but they may also be detrimental to our creative diversity and to cultural pluralism; they make mutual respect all the more imperative.

8. Harmony between culture and development, respect for cultural identities, tolerance for cultural differences in a framework of plural democratic values, socio-economic equity and respect for territorial unity and national sovereignty are among the preconditions for a lasting and just peace.

9. Acceptance of cultural diversity helps to highlight and strengthen intercommunity links rooted in values that can be shared by all the different socio-cultural components of national society.

10. Creativity in societies favours creation, which stems above all from an individual commitment. This commitment is essential to building our future heritage. It is important to preserve and promote the conditions for such creation - in particular the freedom of the creative artist - within every community.

11. The defence of local and regional cultures threatened by cultures with a global reach must not transform the cultures thus affected into relics deprived of their own development dynamics.

12. We must therefore empower all people and communities to harness their creativity and to consolidate and forge ways of living together with others, facilitating genuine human development and the transition to a culture of peace and non-violence.

The Conference in consequence affirms that:

1. Cultural policy, as one of the main components of endogenous and sustainable development policy, should be implemented in co-ordination with policy in other social

areas, on the basis of an integrated approach. Any policy for development must be profoundly sensitive to culture itself.

2. The dialogue between cultures should constitute a fundamental aim of cultural policies and the institutions which embody them at the national and international level; universal freedom of expression is vital for this interaction and for effective participation in cultural life.

3. Cultural policies for the coming century must be anticipatory, responding to persistent problems as well as to new needs.

4. Effective participation in the information society and the mastery by everyone of information and communications technology constitute a significant dimension of any cultural policy.

5. Cultural policies should promote creativity in all its forms, facilitating access to cultural practices and experiences for all citizens regardless of nationality, race, sex, age, physical or mental disability, enrich the sense of cultural identity and belonging of every individual and community and sustain them in their search for a dignified and safe future.

6. Cultural policies should aim to create a sense of the nation as a multifaceted community within the framework of national unity - a community rooted in values that can be shared by all men and women and give access, space and voice to all its members.

7. Cultural policies should also aim to improve social integration and the quality of life of all members of society without discrimination.

8. Cultural policies must respect gender equality, fully recognizing women's parity of rights and freedom of expression and ensuring their access to decision-making positions.

9. Government should endeavour to achieve closer partnerships with civil society in the design and implementation of cultural policies that are integrated into development strategies.

10. In an increasingly interdependent world, the renewal of cultural policies should be envisioned simultaneously at the local, national, regional and global levels.

11. Countries should work together to build a world of intercultural communication, information and understanding, in which the diversity of cultural values, ethics and behaviours fosters a genuine culture of peace.

12. Cultural policies should place particular emphasis on promoting and strengthening ways and means of providing broader access to culture for all sectors of the population, combating exclusion and marginalization, and fostering all processes that favour cultural democratization.

13. Cultural policies should recognize the essential contribution that is made by creators to improving the quality of life, to promoting identity and to the cultural development of society.

14. Any cultural policy should take into account all the elements that shape cultural life: creation, preservation of the heritage and dissemination. A balance should be struck

between these factors in order to implement an effective cultural policy, but promoting access to culture and its dissemination is impossible without maintaining a creative dynamic safeguarded by effective legislative protection.

I. POLICY OBJECTIVES RECOMMENDED TO MEMBER STATES

On the basis of the preceding principles, the Conference recommends that States adopt the following five policy objectives:

Objective 1: To make cultural policy one of the key components of development strategy.

1. Design and establish cultural policies or review existing ones in such a way that they become one of the key components of endogenous and sustainable development.

2. Promote to this end the integration of cultural policies into development policies, in particular as regards their interaction with social and economic policies.

3. Contribute to the elaboration by UNESCO of guidelines for the development of an international research and training agenda with regard to culture and development.

4. Adopt and put into practice a broader vision of national cultural policy in accordance with the actual conditions in each country, and endeavour to encourage the participation of civil society, including the media.

5. Ensure the full involvement of creators and their professional organizations in the realization of this new vision.

6. Encourage the development and improvement of procedures conducive to cross-sectoral co-ordination of cultural policies.

7. Co-operate internationally and regionally in engaging in cultural activities to tackle the challenges of urbanization, globalization and ongoing technological changes.

8. Promote activities designed to raise the awareness of the population and decision-making bodies to the importance of taking into account cultural factors in the process of sustainable development.

9. Promote exchange and dialogue between individuals, the community and countries on the basis of shared values.

10. Endeavour to obtain, where necessary in co-operation with UNESCO, the recognition of the cultural dimension in the next International Development Strategy and to stimulate debate in both the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the General Assembly of the United Nations.

Objective 2: Promote creativity and participation in cultural life

1. Continue to treat the different components of the nation with the same respect and offer them equal opportunities to flourish, placing the emphasis on local initiatives which reflect the diversity of cultural profiles.

2. Ensure through cultural and urban cultural policies the development of a local, creative and participatory cultural life and pluralistic management of diversity.

3. Promote knowledge and understanding of cultural and linguistic diversity by strengthening the cultural content of formal and non-formal education, in particular by encouraging the learning of one or more foreign languages.

4. Promote new links between culture and the education system so as to ensure full recognition of culture and the arts as a fundamental dimension of education for all, develop artistic education and stimulate creativity in education programmes at all levels.

5. Recognize the need to give particular attention to the implementation of existing international human rights instruments such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Vienna Declaration on Human Rights and make an inventory of cultural rights by evaluating existing instruments which relate to cultural rights.

6. Further cultural policies, programmes, institutions and projects in order to ensure the full participation on equal terms of all individuals in society.

7. Pay greater attention to the role of culture in social transformation processes.

8. Give recognition to women's achievements in culture and development and ensure their participation in the formulation and implementation of cultural policies at all levels.

9. Review all cultural policies, programmes and institutions in order to ensure in particular respect for the rights of the child, as well as those of vulnerable groups with special educational and cultural needs; take into account the needs and aspirations of the young - whose new cultural practices in particular should be supported - as well as the elderly who are all too often left out of cultural life.

10. Allocate appropriate resources to education, cultural research and information necessary for devising and implementing cultural policies.

Objective 3: Reinforce policy and practice to safeguard and enhance the cultural heritage, tangible and intangible, moveable and immoveable, and to promote cultural industries

1. Renew and reinforce national commitments to applying UNESCO's Conventions and Recommendations on the conservation of the moveable and immoveable heritage, on the safeguarding of traditional and popular culture, and on the status of the artist and linked issues.

2. Strengthen efficiency in the cultural sector through training schemes for national specialists and cultural administrators and managers, and provide equal opportunities for women in these fields.

3. Renew the traditional definition of heritage, which today must be understood as all natural and cultural elements, tangible or intangible, which are inherited or newly created. Through these elements social groups recognize their identity and commit themselves to pass it on to future generations in a better and enriched form.

4. Acknowledge the emergence of new categories in the area of cultural heritage, such as the cultural landscape, the industrial heritage and cultural tourism.

5. Strengthen the study, inventory, registration and cataloguing of heritage, including oral traditions, so as to permit the design of adequate and effective instruments for the implementation of traditional as well as scientific conservation policies.

6. Encourage through all possible legal and diplomatic means the return and/or restitution of cultural property to its countries of origin.

7. Include and ensure the protection of buildings, sites, ensembles and landscapes of cultural value in urban and regional development plans, programmes and policies.

8. Directly involve citizens and local communities in heritage conservation programmes and establish a list of best practices for heritage policies.

9. Ensure that tourism is respectful of cultures and of the environment and that the income it generates is also used for equitably preserving heritage resources and for strengthening cultural development.

10. Give priority to the creation of a network at the national, regional and international level involving artists and administrators of projects and cultural amenities in order to improve access to culture in both quantitative and qualitative terms.

11. Assist artists, designers and craftspeople by clarifying, safeguarding and improving the rights of creators and consolidate these rights in relation to the market, both locally and worldwide, by preventing commercial abuses.

12. Promote the idea that cultural goods and services should be fully recognized and treated as being not like other forms of merchandise.

13. Intensify co-operation between government, the business sector and other civil society organizations in the field of culture by providing the latter with appropriate regulatory frameworks.

14. Prevent illicit traffic in cultural property on a worldwide basis and in particular the acquisition of unprovenanced objects by museums and private collectors.

Objective 4: Promote cultural and linguistic diversity in and for the information society

1. Provide communication networks, including radio, television and information technologies which serve the cultural and educational needs of the public; encourage the commitment of radio, television, the press and the other media to cultural development issues, such as the promotion of local, regional and national cultures and languages, exploration and preservation of the national heritage and promotion of the diversity of cultural traditions and indigenous and national cultural identities, while guaranteeing the editorial independence of the public service media.

2. Consider providing public radio and television and promote space for community, linguistic and minority services, particularly at the local level and with a view to promoting non-violence.

3. Adopt or reinforce national efforts that foster media pluralism and freedom of expression.

4. Take measures to promote the education and training of children in the use of new media technologies and to combat violence and intolerance, by contributing in particular to the activities of centres or institutions specializing in exchanges of information on children and violence on the screen.

5. Promote the development and use of new technologies and new communication and information services, stress the importance of access to information highways and services at affordable prices and the equal use of languages, and encourage the use of new technologies in public services.

6. Promote in addition education conducive to the mastery and creative use of new information technologies among the younger generations as users and producers of messages and content, and give priority to education in civic values and the training of teachers in new technologies.

7. Elaborate policies for the preservation and development of archives, museums, libraries and other information generated and/or collected by governmental and non-governmental institutions, when possible by digitalization, and establish mechanisms to facilitate access to that content, including the promotion of these institutions as centres for information, education and lifelong learning.

8. Promote knowledge of the cultural and natural heritage by the virtual means provided by the new technologies.

9. Recognize the significance of the new media technologies for the work of creative people as well as the key role of artistic creation in building the information society.

10. Co-operate in the domain of audiovisual media, particularly as regards training, and the development and distribution of audiovisual productions.

11. Encourage cultural co-operation, particularly through joint projects in the field of cultural industries (production, investment and transfer of rights).

12. Encourage research on the relationship between culture and its dissemination in the media and through new communication services, and support efforts to co-ordinate, and possibly harmonize, methods of measurement and evaluation of cultural programming in the media.

Objective 5:	**Make more human and financial resources available for cultural development**

1. Seek to maintain or increase investment at the national level in cultural development and commit, where appropriate, a certain percentage of the government budget for this purpose, in accordance with overall development objectives, priorities and plans.

2. Invite local authorities to commit more funds to cultural activities and encourage them to strengthen their role in the field of cultural development.

3. Devise and develop fiscal frameworks for cultural activities in order to promote business support for cultural development, and elaborate mechanisms such as public endowments and revenue-earning projects by cultural institutions and the tourism and sports sectors.

4. Examine all appropriate measures to ensure that government policies take into account their effect or likely effect on the process of cultural development of another country.

5. Invite the United Nations' funds and programmes, in particular the UNDP, the specialized financial institutions and the national and regional financing bodies to increase the financial assistance they provide for development projects with a significant cultural component.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF UNESCO

The Conference recommends the following lines of action to the Director-General of UNESCO:

1. Take the present Action Plan into account when preparing UNESCO's future programme.

2. Elaborate a comprehensive strategy for practical follow-up to this Conference including the possibility or not of organizing a World Summit on Culture and Development, with a view to submitting the question to the Executive Board.

3. Encourage the establishment of networks for research and information on cultural policies for development, including study of the establishment of an observatory of cultural policies.

4. Bring the present Action Plan to the attention of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and through him to the General Assembly, with a view to submitting a report on the results of the present Conference to the latter at its 53rd session, in accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 52/197.

5. Communicate the present Action Plan to the Heads of all the Specialized Agencies of the United Nations system, to other intergovernmental organizations, both international and regional, with a view to seeking the inclusion of cultural policy objectives in all their development programmes and activities, in consultation with Member States and with their approval.

6. Pursue the goal of obtaining the integration of a cultural perspective into the next International Development Strategy and invite the Specialized Agencies to evaluate their development practices and policies in this perspective.

7. Propose to the Executive Board a set of projects promoting reflection, exchanges of experience and the development of joint projects designed to promote cultural policies with a view to sustainable human development.

8. Suggest to the Secretary-General of the United Nations that one year of the Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006) be devoted to the connections between culture and development and the elimination of poverty.

9. UNESCO should, in the light of the results of the Earth Summit, the Earth Summit+5 and the Habitat II Conference, develop mechanisms in order to emphasize the vital place of the cultural heritage in the environment and as an important factor for sustainable development.

10. Encourage Member States to lodge with UNESCO their cultural strategies, with a view to furthering exchanges of information, ideas and practices.

11. Elaborate policies, design programmes and allocate and raise extra budgetary funds with a view to intensifying multilateral cultural co-operation for the improvement of research in the area of international co-operation in and for cultural policies and development.

12. Explore ways of further developing co-operation between UNESCO and other international organizations.

13. Pursue the publication by UNESCO of a biennial *World Culture Report*.

14. Promote the creation of an observatory of linguistic policies.